

Poems by Angel C. Dye
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Tapestry

There are dangling threads and strands
frayed, loose, hanging around the hems
of my skin.

Two knotted a long time ago,
ripped to shreds and were never able to mend.
I am their tapestry, their crooked cloth,
their patch on ripped-knee jeans
and snagged shirts.

Sometimes we all tangle into each other.
I feel one's blue-black eyes
the same way I feel the other's doped veins and venom.
They are separate ends of the same bolt of fabric;
I am all that joins them now.

Sometimes I want to be my own, not theirs,
thimble against the pricks drawing my blood.

I am them even with new stitches,
hanging on to what I think is their regard for me by a thread.
Safety pinning the pieces they've left me with
just to make something wearable.
I am wearing too big and too small skin
that they draped and stretched over me when they felt like it,
and now I am old enough to tailor myself into whatever I want to be.

Of course, I will have to washboard bathe
the rags I have been for twenty years,
but once I am wrung out and hung to drip dry
I will soak up sun like it is all that can revive
the violets and rubies of my cloth that have faded.
I will wear the two ends of my newly stitched garment,
and their knots and tangles will not strangle me
but they will make me whole.

Black is...

the new Black
the old Black
always Black to Black
and Back to Black

It's back to that

Blacker the Black the sweeter the Black
not the deeper the lack or the cheaper the crack
not the triller the trap but the iller the rap
not the breaking of backs or the deafening of gats
not bruises and slaps or sippin on yac
We be so Black we much more than just that

We colorfully rainbow Black
MADE WITH MELANIN and **HANDLE WITH CARE**
inscribed in our tats

What a time to be Black
History, mystery, present, future, past
We be that, that brown, down, cool, classic Black
When the world ends, we'll still be around after that

True Black, bold Black, best Black, so Black
BUY BLACK
Don't *try* Black
Don't spray tan, cornrow, or artificial dye Black
Don't lie on Black, deny Black,
then when it's convenient—rely on Black

You gotta be born Black,
not just adorned in Black
Beneath phenotype or *you talk white*
you be Black because it's on the inside

You can't look at Black and decide that
only a wide nose and naps constitute Black
There's so much more to it than that
It's bone deep and erected in our backs

So stop trying to show you Black
and get to know Black
like really sow into Black
grow more spiritual and soulful Black

be noble Black
and don't let no one control yo Black

You say you've met God and she's Black
Well did she tell you that
every color mixed together becomes Black?
You should be proud and own that:
no hue gets its name without paying homage to Black,
and within you
you got all of that